

7/2/72

Dear Ed,

Rather difficult times lies ahead, closely, I fear. To relax a bit I have been ~~spending~~ spending the afternoon with Order of Battle, Ib Melchior's novel on the Werewolf plot to kill Eisenhower. I have an advance copy. Harpers are bring it out in August. But although I have relaxed much, my mind does wander to the impending problem from time to time. It has escaped the past, a past you will find disagreeable in the corrupted, self-justifying form in which I think it will first reach you, more so when you learn the truth of what has been going on in secret, in unthinking stupidity from those you would not, at least for the most part, ^{expect} to so deport themselves.

It centers on approval of Cyril to see the sequestered autopsy materials and the notion of some that first of all a man of his qualifications needs backgrounding to read medical film and secondly that they can at this late date stuff into the head that has avoided all work on the subject, even obvious reading, whatever it is they think necessary to prevent whatever it is they think needs preventing.

With the exception of Howard, who has been severely pressured by everyone else, all have declined my long-standing and written request for a dialogue on this. Howard and I have discussed aspects of this in the past. He has attached conditions to his collaboration his personal integrity requires and strangely, in or rather than been clobbered for it, by everyone in a position to, beginning with Jerry.

I have broken relations with Jerry and Gary for what I regard as personally unconscionable and entirely inexcusable personal behavior and what is little better, being entirely underhanded about it. Jerry is the one to have responded to letters I wrote all toward the end of week before last. His justification of dishonesty and sneakiness is that it is the requirement of what he calls "good conscience".

Much that I'd like to tell you I can't because I'm pledged not to.

What I think you will readily understand is the possible significance of the timing. With more than seven months for decision and agreement, Burke Marshall's approval just happens to coincide with Teddy's move in support of McGovern. And Cyril's seeing the stuff and any comment he will make cannot avoid coinciding with the convention of the campaign.

There was to have been a war council at Sylvia's night before last. Lesar told me two days earlier that it was off or delayed, I don't recall which. So I don't know if or when or by whom Wecht is to have an empty head filled, and from nobody have I had any explanation of the need, except in terms of childhood thinking, if I can use the combination.

I think that for the most part this situation is not new to you, nor is it that if and when the government decided to do this none of us could stop it. All we could do was influence the use or misuse when nothing was done earlier, address the probable consequences if they are not what I have long believed, the intended ones.

Because of your physical isolation, you are separated from details and perhaps from events, even reporting. However, I write to ask that you background me as promptly as you can on any developments or intentions of which you hear. ~~My~~ My interest is not curiosity or any planned use in writing, etc. I want to be prepared for any eventuality. I have not been arguing this with these people. If I had wanted to they have precluded it.

If between what I have said and what you know you are left in doubt, then this amounts to asking you to take me on faith, my judgement and my integrity. I hope you can and will.

You need not, certainly not now or in a rush, record whatever you may have been subjected to by way of what might be called a campaign against me. As an historical record I would welcome anything of this kind, whether or not masked with protestations of limitless respect for my work. It can have the side value of helping cope with the possible consequences. If you can do this and you want confidentiality preserved, please so indicate. Don't trust my memory.

If you remember the page on Marshall and Chapquiddick you sent me from Enquire, that sums the thing up pretty well if you just change the tense from past. I wish I could figure how he can do nothing but the incredible and unnecessary and begin to think it is in the interest of the client-of-record, which is not necessarily the client of heart and in my view simply can't be.

Best,